Today's Squads

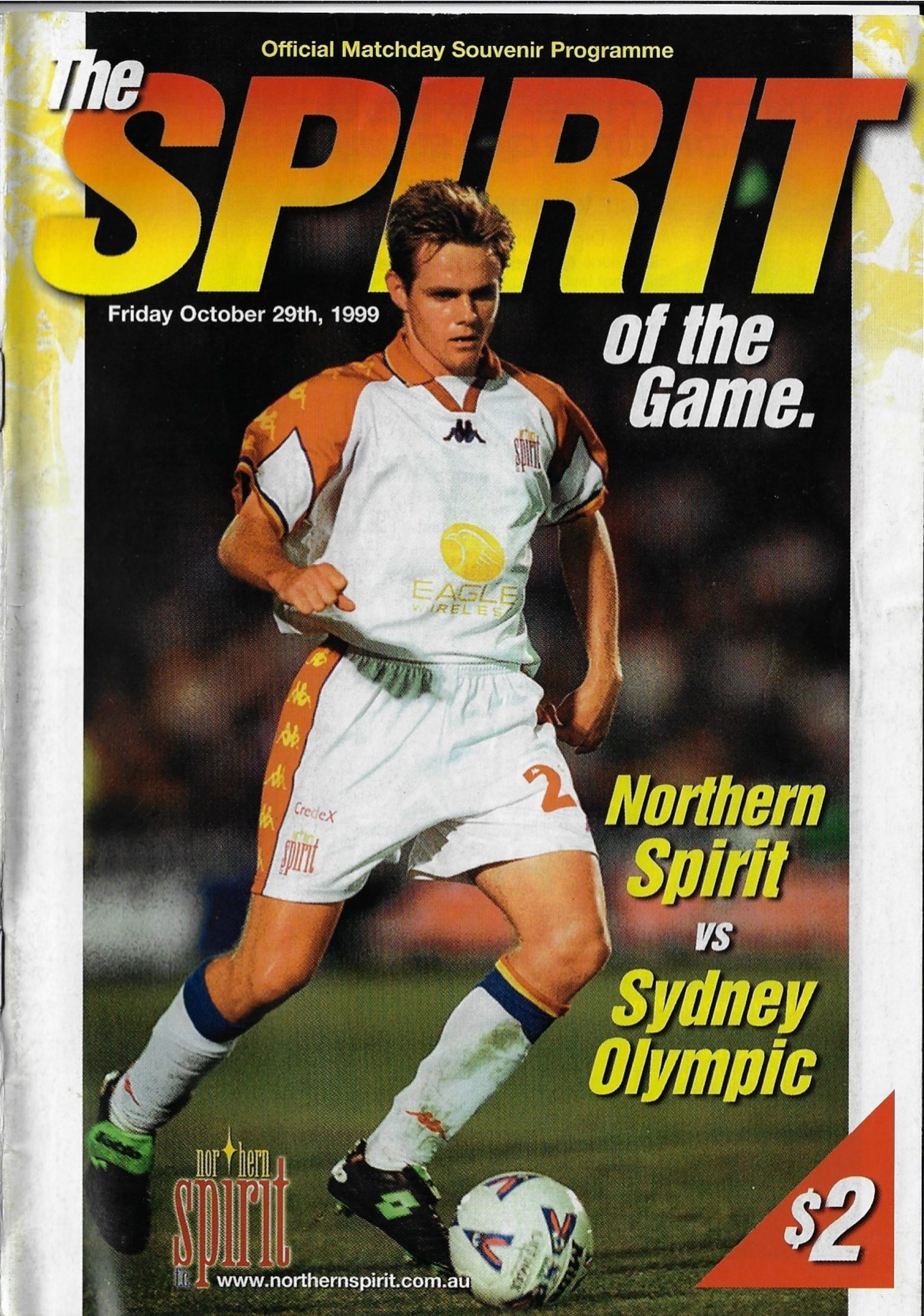
NORTHERN SPIRIT

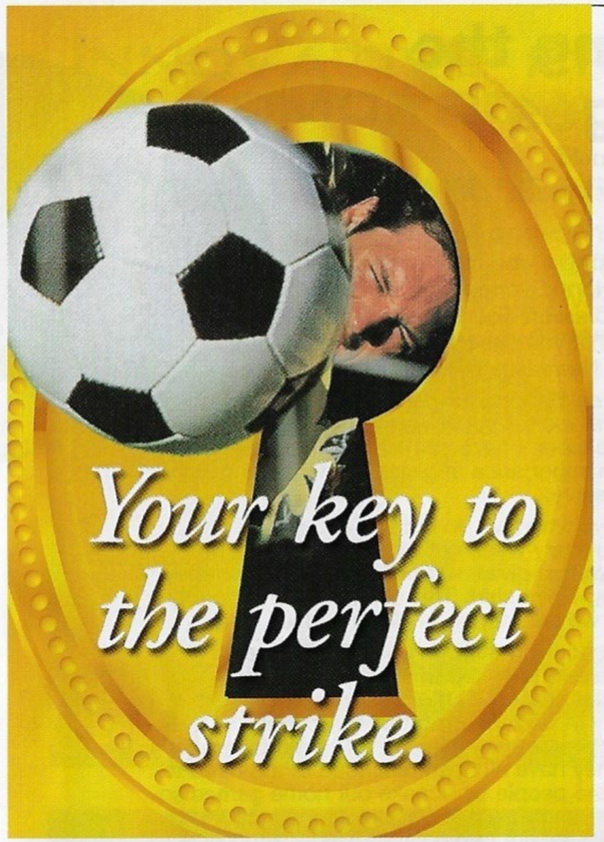
1. John Perosh
2. Robert Enes
3. Matthew Langdon
4. Matthew Bingley
5. Mark Rudan
6. Luke Casserly
7. Robbie Slater (Cpt)
8. Tony Perinich
9. David Seal
11. Troy Cranney
12. Simon Catanzaro
13. Phil Moss
14. Shane Lyons
15. Tony Faria
16. Dean Culina
17. Paul Bilokapic
18. Paul Wearne
19. Graham Arnold (Coach)
20. Jess Van Stratten
21. Michael Cunico
22. Paul Henderson
23. Adam Snyder
24. Elvis Olic
25. Ryan Griffiths
26. Jack Sobczyk
27. Adam Griffiths
28. Abbas Saad
30. Sean Cranney

SYDNEY OLYMPIC

1. Jim Kourtis
2. Scott Thomas
3. Chris Zoricich
4. Peter Tsekenis (Cpt)
5. Scott Baillie
6. Ante Juric
7. Zlatko Arambasic
8. Marcus Philips
9. Pablo Cardozo
10. Brett Emerton
11. Chris Kalantzis
14. Gabriel Mendez
15. Lindsay Wilson
16. Adrian Cervinski
17. Paul Kohler
18. John Kyriazopoulos
19. Nick Carle
20. George Bouhoutsos
21. Lee Miot
22. Peter Zorbas

Coach — Branko Culina
Team Manager — Peter Christofides





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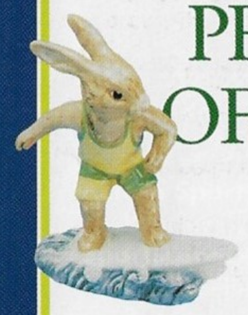

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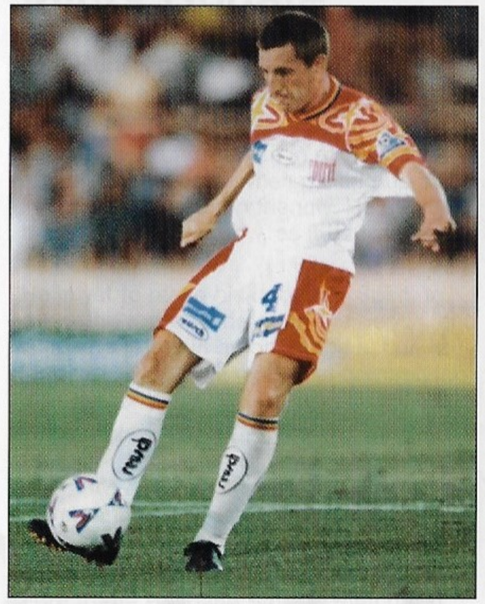
JIGSAW R09/49 10/99

Thanks for the memories

A tribute to Spirit fans from Ian 'Chippy' Crook

by Micky Brock



Ian Crook

I HAVE decided, after great deliberation, it is time to hang up my boots and retire, but before doing so, I must say a massive thank-you to our supporters.

You have been magnificent, and I know that this is the kind of thing all players say when giving it away, but in this instance it happens to be heart-felt. And I honestly cannot think of a better place to say goodbye than here at Spirit park and in front of Australia's best fans.

My reasons for taking this decision are many, not least of which is the amount of work Arnie has to cope with behind the scenes, much of which goes unnoticed. I'm fortunate that he offered me the opportunity to become his assistant, and it wasn't until this time that even I realised just how involved it all is. Needless to say, for me it is a full-time job. It's a job that must be given 100% effort and I realise I can't do that when playing as well.

It is the major decision of every player's career and, at the end of day, I'm now 37-years-old and have achieved much more than I could have dreamt of over the last 20 or so years. The other factor is that I am not the future of this club and, if I was to hold back a youth player, it would be detrimental to the future wellbeing of Northern Spirit. I am not prepared to do that.

Another reason for my deciding to retire is that I can now put all of my effort into the club. That IS my future.

Arnie is the boss. However, I want to be part of making this club not just the best off the park, which I firmly believe it is, but the best off the pitch, too – a mantle currently held by South Melbourne.

I firmly believe that it is the supporters who made this club what it is today, not just the backroom boys, and Australian football will one day thank the Spirit fans as much as we do. As the curtain comes down on one career, another opens, and I look forward to to assisting Arnie for many more years to come.

So thank-you for making me so welcome, and for the messages and kind words which have been passed on to me on my retirement.

Sponsorship Deal

THE future of Northern Spirit Football Club has been secured with a major sponsorship deal over the next three seasons.

The sponsorship deal with see the club's shirt emblazoned with the names of telecommunications group Eagle Wireless and trading company Credex.

Spirit chairman Remo Nogarotto said:"The sponsorship deal also helps the long-term viability of the club with a financial deal that is in line with our desire to take soccer in this country to the levels enjoyed by other football codes."

CredeX

New Signings

WELCOME to Abbas Saad and Sean Cranney who have both joined the club this week. Cranners 'Jnr' has been signed to fill the enormous hole left by the retirement of Ian Crook, and Saad has been brought in to strengthen the squad, especially in the striking department.

Cranney's season was marred by injury last year, but still contributed to the Brisbane Strikers' cause, with 14 apearances and two goals.

A strong, hard tackling lad, Sean will certainly be up to the task of adding some bite in midfield.

Older brother Troy (Cranney Snr) said: "It'll be nice to have him around again and hopefully we can work as well on the pitch together for Northern Spirit as we did for the Strikers a couple of years ago."

Abbas only made one appearance for Sydney United last season, mainly due to a long-term injury, but has spent the off-season regaining fitness. He will add another dimension to the forward line and is an extremely mobile and pacey striker.

I'm sure the supporters will soon warm to both lads and give them a rousing 'Spirit Park' welcome.

Zane Gone

CLAYTON Zane has joined Norwegian club Molde on a four-year contract, for $700,000. The transfer deal means the Olyroo striker will be playing in this season's European Champions League.

I'm you will all join in wth wishing him the very best of luck and a heartfelt thanks.

Injury Update

TONY Perinich came through a Youth Team match unscathed, earlier this month, and is hoping for an early return to first team consideration.

"Pezza" was unfortunate in missing the entire 98/99 season when picking up an injury in a pre-season friendly. He must believe in deja vu, now, as it happened again this year.

He is yet to make his debut for Spirit, in either the run-on side or on the bench, and is itching to get in amongst the action at long last, which will really fuel competition up-front for places.

Graham Arnold was set to play Perinich from the start of the Strikers match, along with himself. Arnie said: "I've come out of retirement, just in case no-one noticed I had! I'll play at sweeper and direct the traffic from the back."

Prior to the Brisbane Strikers match last the weekend, there were no other serious injuries to the first-team squad.

Paul Bilokapic and Michael Cunico were given a run in the Youth side at the weekend, missing out on the trip to Queensland. Dean Culina joined them in the starting line-up, but this was to help him in getting some much needed match practice.

Young goalkeeper Jess van Stratten is away with the Australian Joeys squad and isn't expected to return to the club for a number of weeks yet. We all wish him well in his endeavours.

STOP PRESS

SEAN Cranney and Abbas Saad both played an important part in last weekend's 2-2 draw in Brisbane. Luke Casserly played a defence splitting pass for Sean Cranney who, in turn, headed on for Matthew Bingley to slip home for Spirit's first goal before Saad turned defeat into a share of the spoils. With just a minute remaining on the clock, 'Bingers' long range effort was blocked by the Strikers 'keeper Clint Bolton. He was unable to hold the ball and Saad was the first to react and hit the back of the net. The bad news, the 'Robbie's' – Slater and Enes – plus David Seal picked up knocks.

(Full match report inside).

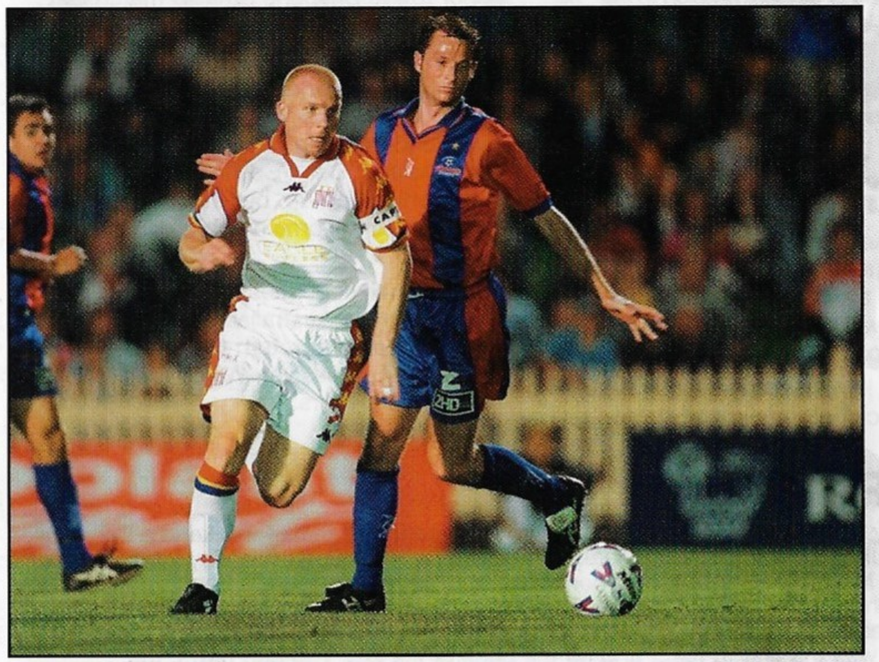
NO SHOW 'HENDO'

For the first time in Northern Spirit's NSL history, Paul Henderson took no part in the match. His record now stands at 33 appearances out of the club's 34 NSL matches.

Northern Spirit 0
Newcastle Breakers 2

at North Sydney Oval, Friday October 5th, 1999

Coach Graham Arnold's face says it all



Robbie Slater makes a run

Broken Spirits

THE night the Breakers from Newcastle came to Spirit Park may turn out to be a watershed for our boys. The visitors grabbed two goals on the break and left 13,000 Spirit-hearts broken – not least Arnie's.

In spite of some early pressure – when Ian Crook went close with a free-kick, which shaved the bar from 25-metres out, and a powerful effort deflected wide from Robbie Slater just inside the area – the team would not be happy with their performance, come the final whistle.

Time stood still, or at least the Spirit defence did, when Newcastle's Greg Owen made a run past the flat Spirit back-four to latch on to a pass 35-metres out, controlled it with his left foot to leave the advancing keeper, Paul Henderson, stranded.

Spirit fans were left gasping in disbelief at this shock, completely against the run of play.

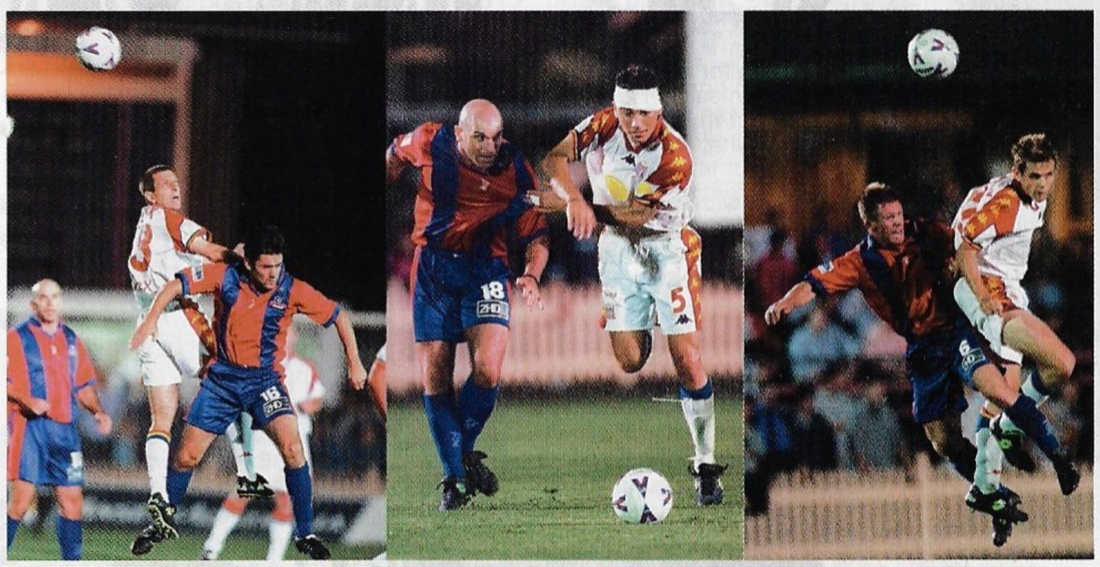
Newcastle looked content to sit on their lead, and at times Matthew Langdon – the obvious dangerman for Spirit – had to contend with five markers in his immediate left-side zone.

Shane Price was booked for a shocking tackle on David Seal, but Spirit failed to find a way past some dogged Breakers defending, who packed out Spirit in the centre of the park and always looked dangerous on the break.

Spirit's passing often let them down and Robbie Slater's runs – so often a mine of inspiration for Spirit in the past, rarely penetrated.

The famous Spirit roar fell silent, amidst the delight of the travelling away support, when Newcastle's Peter Juhniewicz headed home in injury time, in a move which began with a break from the halfway line and ended when he made powerful contact with a cross seven-metres out.

Apart from the fact that again, Spirit have lost their first home game of the season, the occasion was made sadder for it being the last Spirit games for Ian Crook and Clayton Zane, who retire and leave for overseas, respectively.



Battling Spirits, from left to right, Ian Crook soars high to win an aerial contact, wounded Clayton Zane in a tussle with Andy Harper, and Jack Sobczyk in full flight

Culina strays near to enemy lines

Dave Mason reports on one of Spirit's new stars

IF you see Northern Spirit new boy Dean Culina head straight for the Sydney Olympic bench after tonight's game do not despair, he is not going behind enemy lines, just saying G'day to his greatest fan and critic - father Branco.

Culina, who has joined Northern Spirit after spending last season playing Premier League football for West Vale in Victoria, is the son of Sydney Olympic coach Branco Culina.

Dean had previously spent time under David Mitchell at Sydney United before heading south and, throughout all his trials and tribulations, father Branco was there, as all good fathers are.

"He has always been there for me when it comes to my soccer," Dean said. "He gives me advice constantly about my games. What I've done right and what I'm doing wrong.

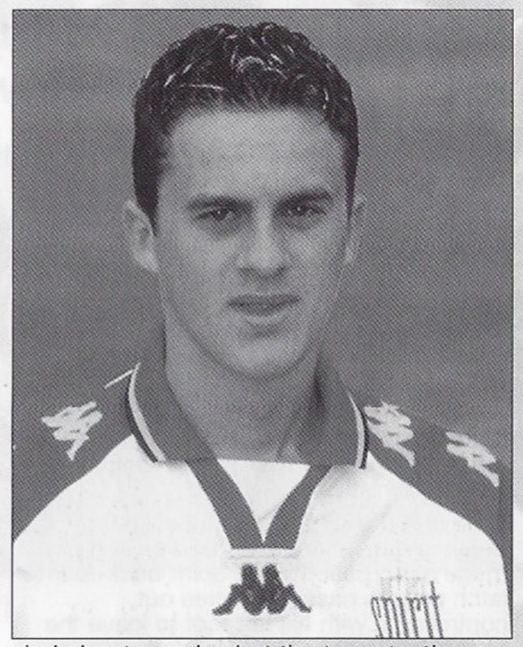
"It's great to have a father with such a good knowledge of the game and I speak to him regularly."

This week, those conversations have been limited, as Dean did not want to give too much away regarding Spirit's plans for tonight's battle at North Sydney Oval.

In the National Soccer League, opposition coaches tend to play their cards close to their chests, regarding team selections and tactics, hoping to catch their opponents unawares in the opening exchanges.

Will Culina be brought into the side? Is Casserly playing? Who will play up front for Northern Spirit? They are all questions Branco Culina would have been thinking about this week but he should look elsewhere for answers.

"I am enjoying my time at Northern Spirit and have settled in very well. I still talk to



dad about my play but the team tactics aren't discussed," 21-year-old Culina said.

Since joining Northern Spirit, Culina has quickly adapted to full-time training under coach Graham Arnold and admits he is relishing the opportunity to train twice a day in a professional set up. "Full time training is certainly a lot different to the part-time set-ups I've been involved with in Victoria and at Sydney United," Culina said.

"Training full time gives you the opportunity to work a lot harder on your game and your skills and I can feel myself improving in the short time I have been at the club."

That improvement has seen the gifted sweeper move into the picture for first-team selection, as Arnold casts his eyes over a plethora of talented young players at Northern Spirit this season. Besides the established first-grade players, Culina is locked in a weekly battle with six members of last season's Youth League side, as well as fellow youngsters Simon Catanzaro and Shane Lyons.

It's a cut-throat world for the younger players but Culina is setting his goals high for the 1999/00 season. "My short term goal is to get myself into the first-grade squad and get onto the field for my debut," Culina said. "By the end of the season I want to be a regular member of the first grade side."

Spirit fans need fave no fear

By RAY GATT

soccer correspondent for The Australian

NO need to panic. That's the message for Northern Spirit fans who must be a little concerned at the team's indifferent start to the season.

Sure, on the surface, Spirit's results after the first four rounds are not so flash. A win, a draw and two losses has them in the bottom half of the table (12th) with just four points – two clear wins behind equal top-placed Carlton and Brisbane Strikers.

If you remember clearly, Graham Arnold's men did not have such a great start last season, recording two losses (Sydney Olympic and Perth) in their opening four matches as the critics came out of the woodwork to suggest the then new kids on the Australian soccer block would struggle to make the finals.

But, we all know what happened. Spirit recovered to make the top six and, along the way, created some new heroes and won over a large section of the doubting Thomases.

It should also be pointed out that Spirit have actually had a better start when compared to the corresponding matches last season. They lost away to Sydney United, Brisbane and South Melbourne and drew with Newcastle at home to register a single point.

This season they have managed four points from those matches, beating United away and drawing with Brisbane away – and that's a definite positive for Arnie to draw on.

Going on the early season results, there is little doubt that this season's championship is going to be one of the tightest and toughest on record with little separating most of the teams. Maybe once the season settles into a rhythm, a clearer picture will emerge but, it's hard to see any team breaking away from the rest. Already there are 14 teams bunched tightly in the pack behind Carlton and Brisbane.

Interestingly, apart from the top two, Sydney Olympic, Perth Glory and Newcastle Breakers also remain unbeaten with the Strikers and Newcastle proving the surprise packets.

John Kosmina has worked wonders at Brisbane. He has been forced to operate on a budget which would be lucky to keep Ronaldo in bootlaces for a month, yet he has so far produced an eager squad which is going to cause a few more headaches before this season is over.

With little funds, Kosmina has not been able to delve into the transfer market for top quality players and, instead, has had to rely on bargain buys from the Queensland State League.

Similarly, Newcastle's Lee Sterrey doesn't have the high finances to throw around money like Perth Glory, Parramatta, Sydney Olympic, Marconi and Spirit. Yet, he has picked up a number of useful players such as Andy Harper, Travis Dodd and Vasco Trpcevski.

The Strikers and Newcastle are part of a top six which has an unusual look about it with the so-called big guns Spirit, Marconi Stallions, Parramatta Power and Adelaide Force back in the pack at this stage.

And lurking just behind the top six are Canberra Cosmos, who have managed two wins from four games to be in seventh spot on goal difference.

Cosmos were supposed to be one of the whipping boys of the NSL, but astute and personable coach Tommy Sermanni has the te on has also added some much needed steel to their play.

Beware the Kiwis, the Football Kingz, who have recovered from a slow start to register a win (against defending champions South Melbourne no less) and a draw in their last two matches.

The Kingz are learning quickly what the NSL is all about, especially the speed of the game and the commitment required.

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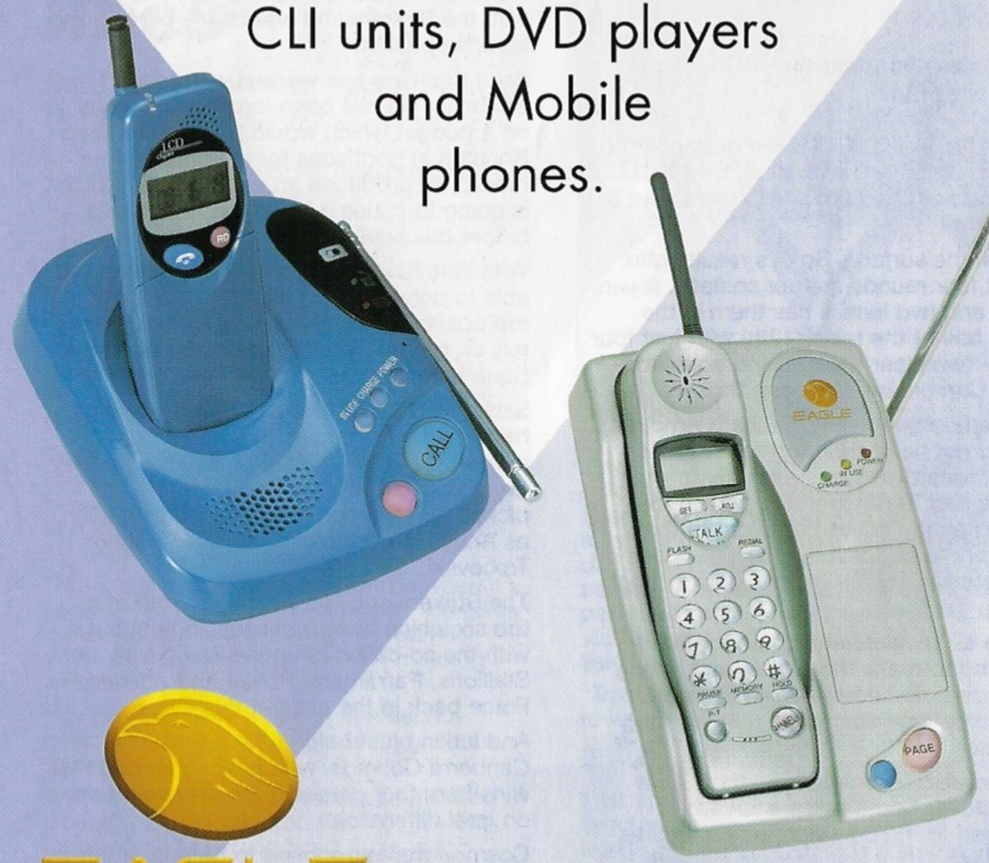

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The ref blows for ...

Offside

By Con Diomis

Offside is probably the most contentious ruling in football. You have to be in an 'active' position to be offside, and this is often confused with being 'passive' offside.

Passive means that you are not directly involved with the attack, and so seek to play no part in the move.

A good example of 'passive' offside is cited thus: If an attacker is coming back from an offside position and is, in this example, on the edge of the penalty area when his team mate were to shoot from 30 metres out and over the head of his strike partner, the following would apply: If a goal were scored, the player coming back onside would not have interfered with play and the goal would stand. However, should the keeper play the ball onto the bar, or it should strike it from the original attempt on goal and then rebound to the player who had previously been deemed as in a 'passive' position, he would automatically become offside as he would be gaining the unfair advantage.

For instance, if you are in the 'active' zone and the ball is played to you by one of your own team, you are offside, no argument. If the ball was to be deflected off of a defender and into your path whilst in the 'active' zone, many believe that you have been played on-side. This is not the case. If you move toward the ball or, in this instance, the ball comes to you in the 'active' zone, you are still offside due to the fact that you are there and are seeking to gain an advantage.

The assistant referee is there to assist, as the name suggests, and if it is in his/her opinion that a player has strayed into an offside position it is their duty to raise their flag and draw attention to it if, for some reason the referee has not had a clear view of the incident. The referee can over-rule the decision if any of the above has taken place. By raising the flag, it aids the official on the pitch to assess the situation, but usually in extreme situations only.

Outright Offside

Closer to the goal-line, and between the goalkeeper, than the last defender.

Passive Offside

Any area, including 'active' zone' where the player does not enter a passage of play, or attempts to use his position to seek an unfair advantage.

It is also worth remembering that you cannot be offside from a throw-in, nor if the ball comes directly to you from a corner kick.

Many thanks to Mr. Diomis for his time in explaining, albeit briefly, part of the offside rule.

He has also asked that if any aspiring official should see him, or any NSL referee, at local grassroot matches, please feel free to ask them any questions relating to the rules. They will be only too happy to assist. Alternatively, if there is a ruling you are unclear of, send a letter to: Whistle Blower, C/- Micky Brock, NSFC, 15 Ridge St., Nth Sydney 2060, an we'll answer as many questions (with the referees help), as possible.

Con Diomis has been an NSL Referee for seven years and was voted the 'Super League Referee of the year' for the 1999 season. He has seen it all and certainly heard more than most.

If you all love Spirit clap your hands and contact Northern Spirit Supporters Club to join in with matchday entertainment or to find out about travel arrangements for State and interstate away games (infoline 8250 4004).

The supporters club also organises open-days and other Northern Spirit events for fans.

Phone Julian Floyd on 0411 028 765 or visit the supporters club web-site: www.spirit.life.nu

Matthew Langdon

Left-wing

northern spirit

Langers gets a little help from his friends

David Mason takes a closer look at the in-form Northern Spirit left-winger

THREE weeks of intensive training with Graham Arnold and Ian Crook has helped transform pocket dynamo Matthew Langdon from a regular first-team player into one of Northern Spirit's trumps.

Langdon burst onto the scene last year with the brashness of youth and played 23 matches after making his debut against Brisbane Strikers in Round 8 of the 1998/99 NSL.

His pace and ability to take on players down the left-hand side earned him rave reviews, but the 19-year-old knew he had to improve one thing to become a complete player – his crossing.

An off-season spent trying to perfect David Beckham's lethal crossing-style had Langdon struggling during pre-season training before a few tips and words of advice from Crook and Arnold.

"I was trying too hard to get some pace on the crosses," Langdon said. "I looked at how David Beckham was doing it and tried to copy that, but he is such a good player it stuffed me up a little trying to do the same.

"With three weeks left before the start of the season, Crooky sat down and had a few words to me, and then Arnie came in we did two or three sessions every week until the start of the season.

"I'm trying to take my time and not rush it, pick a spot in the penalty box and hit it. I'm happy with the way I'm crossing it."

So too are his teammates, who have noticed the quality Langdon is putting into his crosses and are now confident in his ability to get dangerous crosses for David Seal and the rest of the strikers to attack in the penalty box.

"I'm finding that the ball is coming to me a lot more this year and I guess that is because I'm using it well, so the rest of the team have confidence in me," Langdon said.

Confidence is also something Langdon is developing within himself as he continues to find his way in the National Soccer League.

"I am starting to work it out a lot better," Langdon said. "I'm learning when to go, when to stay and when to get a rest. Last year I was stuffed after every game, but this year I am learning and I'm finding it a bit easier."

While happy with his form so far this year – and why wouldn't he be? – Langdon has pledged to make himself a 90-minute player.

"The first game I did nothing in the first half and then came good, and against Newcastle I drifted in an out of the game," he said. "I'm trying to be involved for the full 90 minutes. I managed to do that against South Melbourne and I had my best-ever game that day."

Spirit fans will be hoping he can continue to improve on his best game ever, especially tonight against Sydney Olympic with Northern Spirit desperate for three points to stay in touch with the competition front runners.

Spirit fought on with pride

by Spirit's Phil Moss

Brisbane Strikers 2
Northern Spirit 0

at Suncorp Metway Stadium, Friday Saturday October 23rd, 1999

SUPER-sub Abbas Saad scored a last-minute 'poachers' goal to secure a vital away point in last weekend's 2-all draw with Brisbane Strikers at Suncorp-Metway Stadium.

The former Socceroo, only signed two days before the game, came off the bench at half-time to replace the injured David Seal and was 45 minutes later the toast of the travelling party.

Saad reaped the rewards of a stinging 89th-minute shot by midfielder Matthew Bingley, as Strikers' goalkeeper Clint Bolton could only parry the ball into the path of the lurking Spirit striker to ensure the table-topping home side had their first points stripped from them this season.

'It was fantastic to get on the scoresheet on my debut for the club and hopefully it is a sign of things to come this season,' an excited Saad said after the match. 'But tonight was a real team-effort – the way everyone from the starting eleven to the three subs fought all night and to come back from the brink of defeat was great.'

Spirit started the match in a positive frame of mind, going at the Strikers from the very first kick of the game. But things turned sour in the 7th minute, when former Spirit boy Paul Foster capitalised on a defensive mix-up to score against the run of play.

Spirit refused to lay down, though, and despite losing inspirational captain Robbie Slater to a calf injury in the 15th minute, fought their way back into the match. Led by some aggressive tackling by Luke Casserly and a calm head at the back in Graham Arnold (who only decided to come out of retirement the night before the game), Spirit repelled any further attacks until finally retrieving the game via a Bingley goal in the 35th minute.

A well-weighted long ball from Casserly was flicked on by another Spirit new-boy, Sean Cranney – on to replace Slater – straight into the path of Bingley, who calmly side-footed the ball into the Strikers' net for 1-1.

Shortly before that, Tony Perinich, making his first-grade debut after 14 months on the sideline with injury, nearly scored but for a good save by Bolton.

Midfield workhorse Robbie Enes also came close with a deft chip which only just cleared the crossbar.

The home side, yet to taste defeat this season, again claimed the lead on the stroke of half-time, when Foster flicked on a long throw-in from Nick Meredith for Peter Grierson to finish from close range.

Arnold and assistant Ian Crook were pleased with the fighting nature of their side's display at half-time, although disappointed to go to the sheds 2-1 down.

'We did all the hard work to get to that level, then gave away another soft goal just before the break,' Crooky said. 'You take away two soft goals and we win the match 2-0 – that's the disappointing thing about it.'

With David Seal copping a blow to the head late in the first half and complaining of blurred vision, Saad was introduced for the second half and immediately started to cause concern for the Strikers' defence with his incisive runs.

While it is fair to say the Strikers had the better of the game, Spirit hung on and finally enjoyed the dividends when Saad struck in the 89th minute. The draw was built around determination and spirit – both of which went missing against Newcastle the week prior, and something the players were hell-bent on re-discovering for the remainder of the season.

'You don't always win these types of matches with pretty football, which is something we have prided ourselves on since Day One,' Crook said. 'Away games in this league – especially against a Brisbane side leading the comp – can be a streetfight, and that is what we got tonight.

'We tackled fought and run our hearts out, and if the players can maintain that element of their game, then fans can expect a good season from us.'

The form of replacement keeper John Perosh, who started the match with a brilliant one-on-one save after just three minutes, was another highlight and gives selectors a pleasurable headache with Paul Henderson champing at the bit to regain his place.

Arnold also deserves praise for his 90-minute effort despite minimal training and match-fitness, while in-form stopper Mark Rudan didn't shirk any of his responsibilities. Troy Cranney tackled himself to a standstill, as did Enes until he was forced off with a knee injury in the 60th minute.

"Not many teams will go there and come away with points this season,' Crook said. 'The boys can be proud of that effort, and now we must build on it and concentrate, particularly on our home form."

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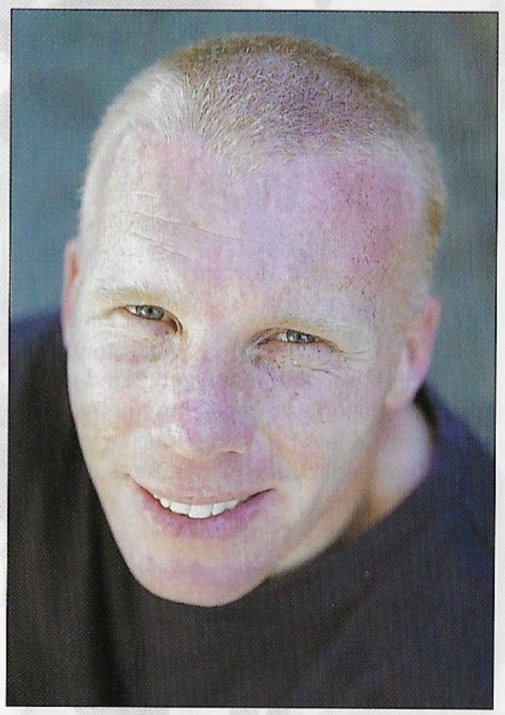
captain's call

ROBBIE SLATER



Our Titanic struggles

OUR first home game of the season was an eye-opener on many counts, not least being that we didn't do ourselves any justice, and we let you, our magnificent supporters, down. It has to be said, something was definitely not right for that game.

Outside Spirit Park on match night there is an electrifying buzz usually, but for some strange reason, it was lacking against the Breakers. It no doubt remains a mystery to many of you, as well as the players, too.

Arnie was as upset, if not more so, as the rest of us and ordered the players in for training on the Saturday morning. We all spoke of where we thought it had all gone horribly wrong, and what we must do to put it right, but in writing this before the Brisbane Strikers match, hopefully we will have started straight away by ending their winning start to the season. At this time, we will have been doing everything possible to improve our standing in the league.

But enough has been said about that performance and it is better that it now be consigned to the bottom drawer of the memory file as it will do no good to keep bringing it up.

We had a couple of titanic struggles against tonight's visitors - Sydney Olympic - last season and at the end of our two league matches, honours were shared. Branko Culina has strengthened his squad with the inclusion of Marcus Phillips and others., but we know that when we play to our strengths, as we did against South Melbourne in Round 2 this year, we are a match for any side in the competition. Obviously, we are after a far better result than the one in Victoria though!

Everyone has been knuckling down in training since the Newcastle match, although there didn't appear to be anything too much wrong before it, and all the players agree that we must show more spirit (no pun intended) in our play. We also need the most important team-member on the team to be in top form - the Spirit supporters.

I hope that what we do on the field tonight will give you plenty to cheer about, and I also know that Spirit Park is a frightening place for visiting teams when all areas of the ground are generating the decibel levels reached last year. For anyone walking past Australia Square, in the heart of the city, they would have to be thinking a storm was rolling in from the harbour!

Once again, the players thank our supporters for their level of support, and for the humour that appears to have replaced some of the more 'colourful' renditions of last season.

Lastly, let's give Sydney Olympic a rousing Spirit Park welcome and let's also make sure that it's loud enough to let the whole of Sydney know that Northern Spirit are at home tonight.

Our stars play the Ajax way

Report by Trevor Morgan
Coach of the Colts

"WITH this season's trials completed and the new season underway, I'm happy to say there's a few talented young boys coming through who I'm sure have the potential to go on and make their mark with the club at first-grade level.

We're experimenting with the system the first-grade want to play, which most of the youngsters haven't played before, so it's a challenge for them to learn a different system.

It's basically the Ajax system, made famous by the modern Dutch team, of which Terry Venables, the former Socceroos coach, is a big fan of.

Most of the youngsters are used to playing four at the back and four in midfield, or five in midfield and three at the back. But in the Ajax way they are playing 3-4-3, and then they have different responsibilities and roles within that system that they are coming to terms with.

The youngsters seem to be adapting to it pretty well, though. It's quite advanced and it's a more attacking technique.

There's a boy we picked up from Newcastle, John Majurovski - he looks like a potential talent, he's only 16 and he's a good player. A left-sided player who plays in the same position as Matthew Langdon, a boy called Vasili, is another.

We've only had two matches so far - a draw with Sydney United Youth and a win against Newcastle Colts, which was 4-1 but we had four first-graders helping us out.

The boys played very well, but we were only up against a Colts side, we weren't up against anything really strong. We dominated the game but weren't exactly fully stretched the whole time.

We've got some difficult times ahead - we're looking to get better results than the side managed last season. I think we've got better players overall in the squad and the quality of football we are capable of playing is better, and hopefully get some players into the first grade.

Another boy worth mentioning is Luciano Berbis - he scored two goals in that 4-1 win and nearly scored a third, and he teamed up very well with Robbie Enes, who was playing along with Tony Perinich, also from the first team.

Luciano is one of the Westfield Sports High kids and he's just finishing Year 12 at the moment, but he looks like he's going to go well. He's one to look out for - he's very talented.

The Youth side and the Colts are playing quite a few games back-to-back at Christie Park in Gladesville this season. There's no entry fee and there's usually two good games on offer.

The draw for the season is available from Melissa at the club office (ph. 9460 2187).

So feel free to come along and get a preview of some of our stars of the future."

TEAM STATS 1999/2000
NATIONAL YOUTH LEAGUE

RESULTS

ROUND 1	Sydney Utd Yth	F	NS Youth	F*
	Marconi Colts	P	NS Colts	P**
ROUND 2	Newcastle Colts	2	NS Youth	3
	Sydney Utd	0	NS Colts	0
ROUND 3	NS Youth	1	Newcastle Yth	0
	NS Colts	4	Newcastle Colts	1
ROUND 4	NSWIS	1	NS Youth	1
	Newcastle Youth	1	NS Colts	1

*United forfeit game

** Postponed

YOUTH TEAM 99/00

	APS	SUB	GLS	Y/C	R/C
Perosh*	3	-	-	-	-
Snyder	3	-	-	1	-
Olic	4	-	-	-	-
R Griffiths	4	-	1	-	-
Sobczyk	2	-	-	-	-
A Griffiths	3	-	1	-	-
Monie	2	1	2	-	-
Kane	4	-	1	-	-
Macrae	3	1	-	-	-
Catanzaro	2	-	-	2	(1)
Kaphel	4	-	-	1	-
Miller	4	-	-	1	-
Antar	-	1	-	-	-
Israel	-	1	-	-	-
Sharp*	1	-	-	-	-
Bilokapic	1	-	-	-	-
Culina	1	-	-	-	-
Cunico	1	-	-	-	-
Hamilton	-	1	-	-	-

Northern Spirit supporters

This season we have two membership clubs - Mix 106.5FM Club Spirit for adults and 9inety6ix.1 Club H for supporters under the age of 17.

Joining the Club is the best way to support Northern Spirit.

Prices are just $45.00 for Mix 106.5FM Club Spirit or $25.00 for 9inety6ix.1 Club H

Season passes offer great savings compared to buying a ticket on a match by match basis and include club membership. So you still save money even after the season has started.

If you need a form ring the office on 9460 2187 and ask for me or email me on brockie@northernspirit.com.au

Micky Brock
Membership and Supporter Liaison Officer

MIX 106-5 FM 'Club Spirit'

is the Club for adult members. It's free to Season Pass holders. Otherwise it's great value for just $45.

Member benefits include:

- Personalised Membership Card.
- Admission to Post Match Function at home games with the players.
- Invitation to special "Members Only Day".
- Kappa/Northern Spirit Cap.
- Northern Spirit Fridge Magnet listing all home fixtures.
- Northern Spirit Bumper Sticker.
- Opportunity to purchase exclusive Northern Spirit Member's Merchandise.
- Regular correspondence from the club
- 10% Discount on mail-order Merchandise.
- Priority booking at our end of season "Presentation Night".
- PLUS the Club is negotiating for big savings for members at entertainment venues and retail stores. Details soon!

9inety6ix.1 'Club H'

Hurry and join the Northern Spirit's newest membership club, 'Club H'. Tailored exclusively for supporters under the age of 17yrs, it features the two biggest 'H's in Australian Soccer - Harry Kewell and Paul Henderson. It's free to Season Pass holders. It offers great value for just $25.

You get:

- Personalised Membership Card
- Chances to be a Mascot at one of 16 home games.
- Admission to Post Match Function at home games with the players.
- Invitation to special "Members Only Day".
- Kappa/Northern Spirit Water Bottle.
- 10% Discount on all Northern Spirit Camps and Academies.
- Northern Spirit Fridge Magnet listing all home fixtures.
- Northern Spirit Bumper Sticker.
- Opportunity to purchase exclusive Northern Spirit Member's Merchandise.
- Regular correspondence from the club
- Priority booking at our end of season "Presentation Night".
- 10% Discount on Mail-order Merchandise
- PLUS the Club is negotiating for big savings for members at entertainment venues and retail stores. Details soon!

Return Details

Northern Spirit FC Pty Ltd 15 Ridge Street, North Sydney NSW 2060
For further enquiries: Tel: 02 9460 2187 • Fax: 02 9460 2183
Email: **contact@northernspirit.com.au** • www: **northernspirit.com.au**

applicants

1
Surname: First name: D.O.B: ☐ Male ☐ Female
Address:
Phone home: work: email:

2
Surname: First name: D.O.B: ☐ Male ☐ Female
Address:
Phone home: work: email:

3
Surname: First name: D.O.B: ☐ Male ☐ Female
Address:
Phone home: work: email:

Spirit's alive on the net

HOTLINKS Internet is proud to launch the new Northern Spirit Football Club web site. The site has been developed under an Internet Sports Marketing contract with the club. Under the contract, Hotlinks has developed for Northern Spirit, a web site using some of the most advanced web technologies available in the world to date.

The Northern Spirit web site will provide both to members and supporters of Northern Spirit a range of services including weekly news and results, right through to an online merchandise shop. Visitors to the web site will also have the opportunity to register for their own email address at the club, at no cost.

The Internet provides the perfect medium for a growing sports club in Australia to increase both its supporter and membership base and according to Hotlinks Internet General Manager, Dale Munckton, Australian sports web sites also attract a large overseas visitor rate. "The sports sites that Hotlinks manage regularly experience up to 25% of the total visitors to the site originating from overseas. These visitors vary from ex-patriot Australians who wish to continue following their club from overseas right through to world wide sports fanatics."

Northern Spirit General Manager Nick Armitage, describes the new site as an exciting new initiative for the club. "Northern Spirit are looking to utilise the new web site to its full potential in both promoting the club to a world wide audience and increasing revenues from items such as merchandising and membership.

"In partnership with Hotlinks, we will also be offering attractive web site sponsorship opportunities," he said.

Northern Spirit will be promoting to both members and supporters to connect to Hotlinks as their Internet Provider. The club will receive a monthly financial return from Hotlinks for all customers generated by the club. Hotlinks is the only Internet Provider who provides this kind of financial return to the club.

Hotlinks Internet provide Internet Sports Marketing services to clubs throughout the NSL, NBL and AFL. Hotlinks also provides a unique level of customer service through its franchise team located throughout Australia. This team is responsible for providing on-site Internet installation and training with every Hotlinks connection at no additional cost to the customer.

The Northern Spirit web site can be found at http://www.northernspirit.com.au

Dale Munckton
General Manager

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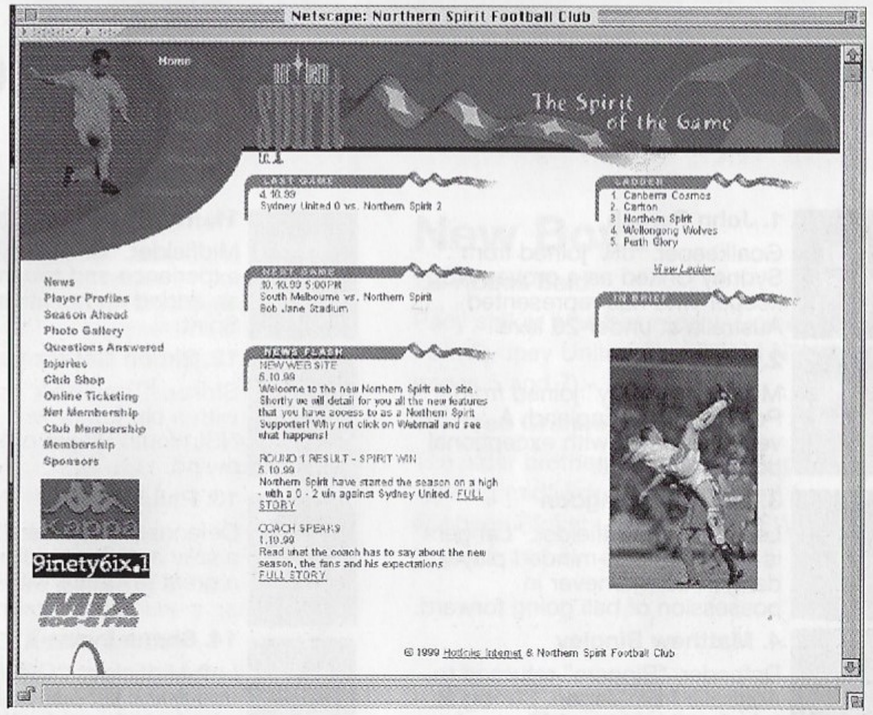
www.northernspirit.com.au



Northern Spirit Squad

1. John Perosh
Goalkeeper. "JP" joined from Sydney United as a proven NSL keeper who has represented Australia at under-20 level.

2. Robert Enes
Midfielder. "Ensy" joined from Portsmouth in England. A versatile player with exceptional poise on the ball.

3. Matthew Langdon
Left-Winger/Midfielder. "Langers" is a pacy attack-minded player, dangerous whenever in possession of ball going forward.

4. Matthew Bingley
Defender. "Bingers" returned to Australia from Japan. Strong at bringing the ball out from defence.

5. Mark Rudan
Central Defender. "Rudes" has great aerial power and has scored some vital goals for Spirit.

6. Luke Casserly
Wing-Back. "Shaggy" plays with great confidence and is deceptively quick when going forward on the right flank.

7. Robbie Slater (Captain)
Central Midfielder. "Bulldog" is the most successful player in Australia, winning the Premier League in England and representing the Socceroos 28 times.

8. Tony Perinich
Striker. "Pero" was recruited from Wollongong Wolves and is a player with a nose for goal.

9. David Seal
Striker. "Sealy" joined from Northampton Town in England, having previously twice been top-scorer in the NSL with Sydney United.

11. Troy Cranney
Midfielder. "Cranners" experience and toughness brings an added competitive edge to Spirit.

12. Simon Catanzaro
Striker. "The Freak" is a player with a big future who won the NSL Youth Player of the Year award.

13. Phil Moss
Defender/Midfielder. "Mossy" is a solid and dependable player, and a great favourite with the fans.

14. Shane Lyons
Left Midfielder. "Cliffy" is a sharp and quick left-hand side player who has played for the Australian Schoolboys.

15. Tony Faria
Left Winger. "Tone E" - a young player with electrifying pace.

16. Dean Culina
Sweeper. "Deano" is a gifted young defender who joins Spirit from the Victorian Premier League.

17. Paul Bilokapic
Central Midfielder. "Billy" won the Northern Spirit Player of the Year last season. He has a lethal left foot and never shirks a tackle.

18. Paul Wearne
Midfielder/Defender. "Wearnie" is an experienced young player, with spells at Carlton, Parramatta Eagles and Marconi.

19. Graham Arnold (Coach)
Sweeper/Striker. "Arnie" has fulfilled an extensive career in Holland, Belgium, Japan. He is the heart and soul of Northern Spirit.

Season 1999-2000

20. Jess van Stratten
Goalkeeper. Jess is the current Australian under-21 Joeys goalie, earmarked for big things and signed as a Spirit apprentice this season.

21. Michael Cunico
Central Midfielder. "Coons" is versatile young player, who brings a new dimension to Spirit's attacking approach.

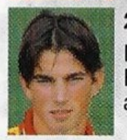
22. Paul Henderson
Goalkeeper. "Hendo" was Spirit's Young Player of the Year, last season, and his cat-like agility improves with every game.

23. Adam Snyder
Striker. "Snyds" is a pacy front-man who broke into the squad from the youth team last season.

24. Elvis Olic
Sweeper. Elvis has tremendous poise and coolness under pressure in defence.

25. Ryan Griffiths
Striker. "Griffo" has the knack of being in the right place at the right time in front of goal.

26. Jack Sobczyk
Defender/Midfield. Jack was named Youth Player of the Year last season, as a robust dynamo in the centre of the park.

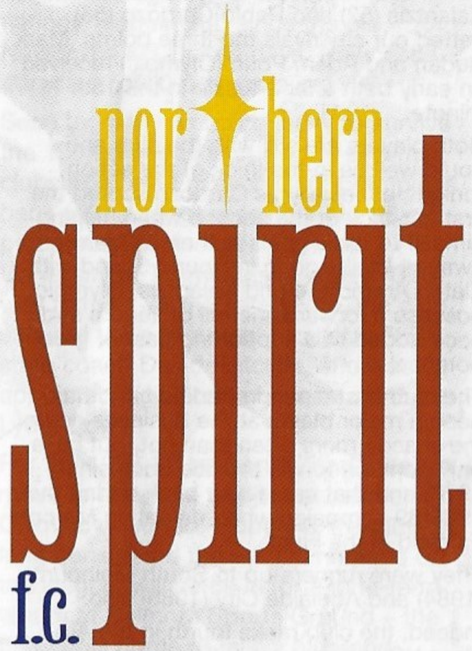


27. Adam Griffiths
Midfield. "Griffo" is the brother of Ryan and is held in high regard as a leader in the centre of defence.

New Boys

28. Abbas Said
Pacy striker who has recently joined Spirit from Sydney United (See TEAM NEWS on pages 5 and 7).

30. Sean Cranney
The older brother of Troy, this tough tackling midfielder has just joined from the Brisbane Strikers (See TEAM NEWS on pages 5 and 7).



Welcome to our visitors tonight ... SYDNEY OLYMPIC

SYDNEY Olympic were the first visitors to Spirit Park back on that historic night last year - Friday October 9th, 1998 - when Northern Spirit played their first NSL match in front of the new record attendance of some 18,985 people.

Sadly, they didn't read the script and ran out two-nil winners after goals from Chris Kalantzis (52) and Pablo Cardozo (56) netted our city rivals the three points. Mark Rudan and Adem Poric (Olympic) received an early bath after a tussle in the 15th minute.

Both players are still with the club and could well be in the thick of the action tonight, especially as Cardozo scored the first hat-trick of the season when helping himself to three goals in their 4-0 romp away at Wollongong in Round 3, and with Zlatko Arambasic and Kalantzis, Olympic possess a forward line full of venom and pace added to a supporting cast of great potential.

The club is steeped in tradition and has been a major player at the business end of the season more often than not, but have only gone on to win the title once since 1977, and that came way back during the 1988/89 campaign when defeating Marconi Fairfield in the Final.

They were runners-up to South Melbourne (1984) and Adelaide City (1986) also.

Indeed, the club ranks fourth in the All-Time NSL League table (Up to the end of the 98/99 season):

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A fairly impressive record by any standard.

Coach Branko Culina has added some much needed bite to the team with the arrival of Marcus Philips, now with his third NSL club after stints with Sydney United and Marconi Fairfield.

Gabriel 'Chichi' Mendez has been used sparingly this term for Olympic, making most of his appearances from the bench, to great effect.

Brett Emerton produced some of his best form against the FIFA All-Stars recently and is a player that always needs to be watched very closely. He can be a very tricky customer to deal with, if given the time and space to take on defenders and can whip in a lethal cross out of nothing.

To redress the balance, Spirit went to Belmore Oval for the return fixture, spurred on by thousands of noisy, fun-loving Spirit fans, to run out as three-two winners. A very pleasing result for the travelling hordes, especially as Mark Rudan received another red card ... by the same referee who sent him off in the opening match of the season. For the record, goals from Captain Robbie Slater (9, 29) and Robbie Enes (54) secured the points and a famous victory for the North Shore club.

Spirit Head To Head

Home

P 1 W 0 D 0 L 1 F 0 A 2 Pts 0

Away

P 1 W 1 D 0 L 0 F 3 A 2 Pts 3

Club history 1958-1999

IN 1958, the Pan-Hellenic soccer club, later to become UTS Olympic, was born. It took the club only five years to establish itself at the top level of domestic football at this time – the NSW First division.

In these pre-national league years, Pan-Hellenic made the grand final of the NSW First Division once, in 1968, losing 2-4 to Sydney City.

Coinciding with a name change to "Sydney Olympic", the club board in 1976 decided to become a foundation member of the then-called Philips Soccer League (PSL). Commencing in 1977, the PSL was Australia's first truly national football competition.

Olympic had a fairly slow beginning to the national league, not finishing above halfway on the final ladder until 1982. In fact, in finishing second last in the PSL in 1979, Olympic was relegated back to NSW First Division. But not for long.

A grand final victory in NSW over Parramatta Eagles in 1980 paved the way for a hasty return to the top flight in 1981. They have been there ever since.

Olympic's long-awaited moment of glory did finally arrive, on 20 May, 1990. Buoyed on by the majority of a packed Parramatta Stadium audience of 26,353, Olympic resoundingly beat Marconi in the grand final 2-0.

Despite great expectations, the early 1990s was a relatively tough time for Olympic. They have reached the finals three times in the last six years, but have yet to record a finals series victory since 1990. One solitary statistic reflects the downturn in Olympic's fortune over recent years. The home gate in their game against Adelaide City in March 1995 – a measly 871 – was by far the lowest ever recorded by Olympic in the national league.

Olympic redeemed themselves in 1995-96 by finishing near the top of the league. Their fans also returned. Olympic's 1995-96 average home crowd of 6,317 was the largest average home crowd for any national league club since the old Newcastle KB United days. Newcastle attracted 6,400 per game in 1980.

Seen by many as being lucky to survive the 1995 off-season culling of several clubs from the Ericsson Cup, Olympic is back with a vengeance. In 1995-96 a prosperous partnership with the University of Technology, Sydney (UTS) was formed. At the same time, the club secured the services of reputable NSW state coach David Ratcliffe, and also appointed high-profile general manager Lydia Dowse.

For the 1996-97 season, a long-awaited move to the more traditional heartland of Olympic occurred. Hopefully the club, so long considered the eternal nomads of the league, will settle in for a long-term tenure at Belmore Sports Ground – the traditional home of fellow blue-and-whites, the Canterbury-Bankstown rugby league club. These recent, positive off and on field achievements indicate that UTS Olympic could very soon again be one of the flagships of Australian soccer.

Andrew Howe